

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**Celeste Philip, MD, MPH**  
State Surgeon General

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

---

Nov. 18, 2016

## World AIDS Day – Stop the Spread

*Free HIV testing and educational event will be held at December 1, 2017*

**Contact:**

Jennifer S. Sexton  
Jennifer.Sexton@flhealth.gov  
941-624-7279



**Port Charlotte, Fla.** – The Florida Department of Health in Charlotte County will be hosting a World AIDS Day event at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Charlotte County at 1532 Forrest Nelson Blvd, Port Charlotte, FL 33952 on December 1, 2016 from 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

World AIDS Day is a day dedicated to commemorating those who have passed on and to raise awareness about AIDS and the global spread of the HIV virus. It is recognized annually on December 1<sup>st</sup>. “Today, more than 1.2 million people in the United States are living with HIV/AIDS, but about 1 in 8 of those are unaware of their infections,” said Dr. Frank Lepore, Administrator for the Florida Department of Health in Charlotte County. “There are substantial health benefits for those individuals with HIV to begin treatment as soon as possible. You can’t get treatment if you don’t know your status. It all begins with testing.”

Currently, no effective cure for HIV exists, but HIV can be controlled with proper treatment and medical care. The medicine used to treat HIV is called antiretroviral therapy or ART. If taken the right way, every day, this medicine can dramatically prolong the lives of many people with HIV, keep them healthy, and greatly lower their chance of transmitting the virus to others. The only way to know for sure if you have HIV is to get tested.

AIDS is the final stage of HIV infection, and not everyone who has HIV advances to this stage.

The World AIDS Day event will include free health screenings for HIV, Hepatitis C and other STDs, as well as health education, and a memorial tree. For additional information please call Cheryl Adams at 941-624-7200 extension 7265.

### About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit [www.FloridaHealth.gov](http://www.FloridaHealth.gov).